

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PSC APPOINTS DEMMAN TO NATURAL GAS DIRECTORSHIP

LINCOLN – Laura Davenport Demman of Papillion has been appointed director and legal counsel of the Public Service Commission's Natural Gas Department effective immediately.

Demman, one of three staff attorneys for the Commission, replaces the former director, who resigned in November.

Commissioner Frank Landis of Lincoln said, "Laura is imminently qualified. She has worked with natural gas issues at the Commission throughout the legislative process that ultimately gave us the authority we have. The ratepayers of Nebraska will be extremely well served by Laura."

Demman joined the Commission's staff during the summer of 2001, following a year as a legislative aide to State Senator Pat Engel of South Sioux City. At the Commission, Demman has served as legal counsel for the Natural Gas Department since its creation by the Nebraska Legislature in May.

As a staff attorney, she has provided legal services for the Commission's Wireless E-911, Communications, Nebraska Universal Service Fund, Grain Warehouse, and Transportation Departments. In addition, Demman has assisted on legislative matters and shared with her colleagues the responsibility for developing rules and regulations under which the Commission operates.

In the two-and-one half years that Demman has been with the Commission, she has handled cases involving natural gas pipeline disputes and serves with the Natural Gas

Staff Subcommittee of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC).

The Commission's Executive Director and General Counsel, Andy Pollock, commended Demman on her work-to-date in the Commission's Natural Gas Department. "Laura has been an extremely effective attorney for the Commission," Pollock said. "She's been instrumental in getting the Commission's natural gas regulatory program up and running. We are fortunate Laura is willing to dedicate herself to completing that task as director of the department."

The Commission currently is considering an application by Aquila for an increase in natural gas rates. During 2004, the Commission intends to adopt further rules and regulations for its natural gas division. The department will continue to monitor and become involved as necessary to protect customers in the bankruptcy of Northwestern Energy of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, which provides natural gas service to four Nebraska communities. The Natural Gas Department also monitors how the costs of natural gas are passed along to consumers.

Demman graduated in 2000 from the University of Nebraska College of Law and has an undergraduate degree from Creighton University. Her high school diploma was earned from Bellevue East.

###